Approved For Release 2007/03/06 : CIA-RDP79B00864A001200020053-9

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#185 EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER OCI #0980/72
2 October 1972

State Dept. review completed

Return To A Familiar Theme

In what otherwise was a rehash of standard themes, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Chnoupek, in his speech before the UN Assembly, restated directly Prague's position on the Munich Agreement. He called for a "definite solution of the problem of the so-called Munich dictate by recognizing its invalidity from the beginning."

During the last month Czechoslovak leaders have been less than explicit about this question. Chnoupek himself on 3 September claimed that an agreement with Bonn was possible before the West German elections, and he did not mention ab initio. It was then noted by the American Embassy in Prague that other references to the issue were less dogmatic. During their trip to East Germany, Husak and Strougal either avoided the subject or referred to it indirectly by thanking Pankow for its support of the Czechoslovak position.

Although one speech should not be viewed as a conclusive indicator, the fact that the ab initio demand was raised in the General Assembly may indicate that Prague is now less optimistic about reaching a settlement with Bonn in the near future. Prague may also be reminding Bonn that an agreement will come about only with a West German concession.

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Sofia Wants Improved Ties With US

Following the lead of his Soviet mentors, Bulgaria's young foreign minister, Petur Mladenov, proposed a major improvement in bilateral relations during a meeting with Secretary Rogers last week. Somewhat grandiosely, the Bulgarian suggested an end to all trade limitations, the signing of a trade agreement providing for MFN, the conclusion of maritime and arbitration agreements, to be followed by a discussion of mutual credit arrangements and joint economic ventures. Steps should also be

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taken, according to Mladenov, to increase scientific and technical cooperation, tourism, and exchanges of expert delegations and athletic teams. As a first step, Mladenov proposed that an official Bulgarian delegation, headed by deputy premier Ivan Popov, visit the US in the near future for exploratory dicussions.

Bulgarian-US relations are somewhere near point zero and have nowhere to go but up. Certainly, a positive attitude in Sofia will go far toward producing such movement; but, as Secretary Rogers pointed out, Sofia has not yet acted on a number of pieces of old business, including a US-proposed consular convention and the continued harassment of US Embassy employees in Bulgaria. Mladenov promised personally to look into the matter of the consular convention and agreed that there should be a general improvement in the political climate. Now that Moscow has clearly laid out the acceptable pattern for improved relations with the US, the Bulgarians have jumped in with typically overzealous proposals. How serious they are will become evident during the step-by-step diplomacy. 25X1

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Gierek Arrives in Paris

Polish party leader Edward Gierek arrived in France today to begin a five-day official visit, his first to a Western country since he became party chairman. Gierek plans to spend today and Tuesday in Paris attending dinners, holding receptions and other such ceremonial activities. On Wednesday he will travel to Lyon for the day. The last two days of his trip will be spent in Paris once again where, on Friday, he and French President Pompidou will sign a joint declaration of friendship and co-operation. Gierek will depart late Friday afternoon to return to Warsaw.

The visit is still being termed an "official state" visit despite the fact that Gierek holds no position in the state administration. The protocol problems involved presumably will be overlooked; and Gierek will have at least three scheduled "tete-a-tetes" with Pompidou, one of which will include French Premier Messmer. 25X1

Verdict In Student Trials Expected This Week

The trial of Zagreb University's highly popular student leaders for their part in last year's political upheavals has ended. The verdict will be read on 5 October. The four defendants are charged with "criminal acts against the people

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and state" and with attempting to overthrow the Croatian government during nationalist disturbances in December. They could get prison terms of one to 15 years. 25X1

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Belgrade To Sell Arms To Lebanon

Yugoslavia may be on the verge of additional arms sales in the third world. Press reports from Beirut indicate the Lebanese have been making "satisfactory" tests of Yugoslav anti-aircraft guns. Up to now, Belgrade has had only limited success in selling its arms, although experts here in Washington claim they are of high quality. Lebanon would like to buy some $65 million in arms and if the press stories are correct, Yugoslavia may get some of their business. 25X1 [redacted]

25X1 [redacted]

NOTE : THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ABOVE REPRESENT ONLY THE ANALYSIS OF THE EE BRANCH.

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